

and almost obsolete. Length $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 inches, wing $3\frac{1}{2}$; tail a mere "fluff" of feathers; nails very long and sharp-pointed. The natives call this bird by a different name to that they give the large Megapode, and look upon it as a distinct bird.

From Marau Sound we proceeded to Sydney, passing within 150 miles of Noumea. I spent a short time there, and finally reached home after eight months' absence.

XXIX.—*Note on the Rallus sulcirostris of Wallace and its Allies.* By P. L. SCLATER.

(Plate VI.)

IN consequence of some remarks kindly communicated to me by Count Salvadori in reference to my recently described *Rallus insignis* (P. Z. S. 1880, p. 66, pl. viii.), my attention has been directed to *Rallus sulcirostris* of Wallace, and I have been led to examine the typical examples of this species in the British Museum. A few short notes on this little-known Rail and its relatives may not be unacceptable to ornithologists.

Rallus sulcirostris was described by Mr. Wallace in 1862 (P. Z. S. p. 345), in his memoir on the birds of the Sula Islands, as "very near *R. celebensis*, perhaps only a variety of that species; the chin and throat are, however, generally black, or but slightly irrorated with white; the bill is decidedly longer and less elevated in proportion at the base; the nasal furrow is longer, and the nostrils longer and linear; on the sides of the lower mandible is a furrow reaching half the length of the bill."

Schlegel, in 1865 (Mus. des P.-B., *Ralli*, p. 22), according to his usual practice when the Leyden Museum does not possess an example of a species, refers *Rallus sulcirostris* to *Rallus (Hypotaenidia) celebensis*, and commits the additional error of giving its locality as "Bouru," not the Sula Islands.

The species does not appear to be again mentioned until 1875, when Count Salvadori, in his article upon Beccari's and

Bruijn's collection from Celebes, after giving some notes on the examples of *Hypotaenidia celebensis* in the collection, states his belief that the variations thus presented tend to confirm Schlegel's views as to the identity with it of *Rallus sulcirostris**. But in a subsequently issued article, Count Salvadori is inclined to come to a different opinion. In his memoir on the new birds of New Guinea and the Papuan Islands, published in the same volume†, Count Salvadori records the occurrence of three examples of a Rail in the Papuan subregion, which he refers doubtfully to *Hypotaenidia celebensis*. Two of these were obtained in Salawatti, and the third at Dorei-hum, on the north coast of New Guinea. Count Salvadori observes that these examples are considerably larger than many others seen by him from Celebes. The beak especially surprised him by its large dimensions; the throat was of a pure black, without any white spots; and the white remiges below of a more obscure colour. From these differences Count Salvadori came to doubt whether the birds did not belong to a distinct species, perhaps to *H. sulcirostris* (Wall.), which, contrary to his former opinion, might yet turn out to be a good species‡.

In this last view of Count Salvadori's I fully share. In the British Museum there is an excellent skin of *R. sulcirostris*, besides a mounted specimen in the gallery, being the types of the species as described by Wallace. Although, as

* Ann. Mus. Civ. Genova, vii. p. 677. † Ibid. p. 976.

‡ Since this was written, Count Salvadori has kindly forwarded to me one of the Salawatti specimens of this Rail for comparison. While it agrees with *R. sulcirostris* in having the throat black, though this colour does not extend quite so far down, it is at once distinguishable by its much larger size and its longer, stronger beak. I do not think it can be properly associated with *R. sulcirostris* or *R. celebensis*; but I am of opinion that it must stand as a distinct local form of this section, under the name *Hypotaenidia saturata*, which Count Salvadori has attached to it in his MS. It may be shortly characterized as follows:—

HYPOTAENIDIA SATURATA, Salvadori, MS.

Similis *H. celebensis*, sed gutture nigro, rostro longiore et fortiore, et corporis crassitie majore diversa: long. tota 12·5, alæ 6·0, caudæ 2·0, tarsi 2·3.

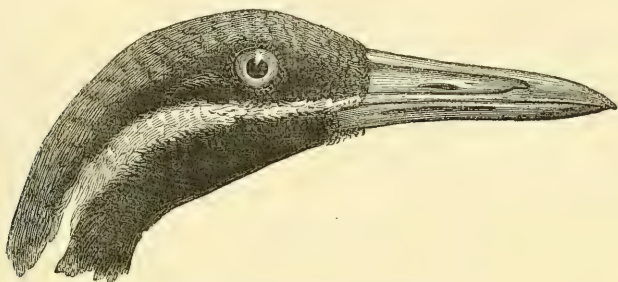
Hab. Ins. Salawatti et Papua borealis.

Wallace states, *Rallus sulcirostris* is closely allied to *R. celebensis*, and has a similar white line on each side of the head, it differs from that species in its smaller size and in the intense black of the throat, which has no appearance of cross bands. Further distinctive characters are to be found in the longer stronger bill, and in the strongly marked sulcus along the lower mandible, whence Mr. Wallace derived its name. I have no doubt of its being an excellent species, which should stand as follows:—

HYPOTÆNIDIA SULCIROSTRIS. (Plate VI.)

Rallus sulcirostris, Wallace, P. Z. S. 1862, p. 345.

Hypotænidia sulcirostris, Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civ. Genova, vii. p. 81.



Head of *Hypotænidia sulcirostris*.

Suprà fusca olivaceo perfusa; capitis lateribus et gutture toto nigris, strigâ rictali cervicem utrinque descendente albâ; abdomine et subalaribus nigris albo transfasciatis; remigum pogoniis internis fascias obsoletas ostendentibus: long. tota 12·5, alæ 5·7, caudæ 2·3, tarsi 2·0, rostri a rictu 2·8.

Hab. Inss. Sula (Wallace).

Obs. Proxima *H. celebensi*, sed gutture nigro, crassitie corporis minore, et rostro robustiore diversa.

The genus *Hypotænidia* was instituted by Reichenbach in 1852 (Naturl. Syst. d. Vögel, p. xxiii), with *Rallus philippensis* as its type*. Schlegel (Mus. des Pays-Bas, *Ralli*, p. 21)

* Reichenbach gives as his type "*Rallus pectoralis*, Cuv.;" which s = *Rallus lewinii*, Sw. (cf. Puch. Rev. Zool. 1851, p. 276); but he refers to his figure, which is simply a copy of Gould's *Rallus pectoralis* (B. Austr. vi. pl. 76), i. e. = *R. philippensis*.

has adopted this generic term for a series of "Rails of the East Indies and Australia, with rather robust beak, more or less straight, and of the length of the head : below, either entirely or in part, including the remiges and wing-coverts, black, with white cross bands : size equalling or exceeding a little that of *R. aquaticus*." I am disposed to believe that this group is a natural one, although there are but slight structural characters to distinguish it from true *Rallus*.

Schlegel assigns four species to *Hypotaenidia*, arranged in two sections, as follows :—

A. Whole body below with white cross bands ; upper surface and wings dark olive-brown ; sides of head black, with a white line from the angle of the mouth to the neck.

1. *H. torquata* (Linn.), of the Philippines.

2. *H. celebensis* (Q. et G.), of Celebes.

B. Lower surface below the neck with white cross bands ; upper surface, starting from the neck, with white spots or bands.

3. *H. philippensis* (Linn.), of the Philippines, Celebes, Australia, New Caledonia, and the Pacific Islands.

4. *H. striata* (Linn.), of India, China, Philippines, Java, &c.

To these species we must now add *H. sulcirostris* and *H. saturata*, as above mentioned, and the fine new *Hypotaenidia insignis*, which I have lately described from New Britain. *H. sulcirostris* and *H. saturata* should succeed *H. celebensis* in Section A, while *H. insignis* will form a section *per se* next to section A, but differing in the absence of the white stripes on each side of the head.

XXX.—*Notes on a 'Catalogue of the Accipitres in the British Museum' by R. Bowdler Sharpe (1874).* By J. H. GURNEY.

[Continued from p. 217.]

MR. SHARPE unites the genera *Leptodon* and *Regerhinus*, dropping, as regards the former, Cuvier's earlier synonym of



J Smit lith

$\frac{1}{2}$

Hanhart imp

HYPOTÆNIDIA SULCIROSTRIS